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AUTHOR Chilcoat, George W.
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ABSTRACT

In considering the historical contributions of women in a high school history course, a series of projects were developed that were activity oriented, created student involvement in historial research, and organized to feature the roles women have played in the development of the United States. Classroom procedures are introduced based on early popular culture forms: (1) the popular story paper; (2) the illustrated song slide; (3) the comic book; and (4) the crankie (a simple, homemade, story device made out of a cardboard box with two dowel sticks and a roll of paper with pictures and words). The objectives for the project are described as well as the rationale for employing these four techniques. The format for a "Student Guide to Writing a Literary Story Paper" as well as all materials used in teaching the song slide, comic book, and crankie segments are included. A 26-item bibliography is appended. (NL)

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"Sisters Are Doin' It For Themselves"

The Feminization of American History Through Popular Culture as Method

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

by

George W. "Skip" Chilcoat

University of Texas at Arlington

Arlington, Texas

SO 020 227

Paper presented at the National Council for the Social Studies Annual Meeting, New York, New York, November 15, 1986.

Introduction

Let's suppose, for argument sake, women's history has equal billing in the secondary history classroom. Abigail and John call for national freedom; Harriet and Frederick speak out on slavery; Mother Jones and Samuel demand labor justice; Ida and Upton write for social change; Rosa and Martin affirm human dignity. Yet, how is this information and other feminine flavored history being taught to students: the giving of 50 minute lecture, the reading of the textbook, the answering of the end-of-the-chapter questions?

Even if women's history is infused into the traditional male oriented history curriculum, the manner in which women's history, in particular, and American history, in general, is taught will make the difference if students either attend to and learn or be turned-off to and bored with historical content. Therefore, what is needed are ways to create some excitement for students, which in turn will motivate them to want to learn women's history.

A number of years ago, I decided there was a need to deliberately increase class time in considering the historical contributions of women in my history course. I wanted to develop a number of activities that met at least two criteria: first, the activity had to be active oriented that would cause student involvement in historical research, and second, the activity had to be organized in such a way as to foster the major roles that women have played in the development of this country.

The purpose of this paper is to introduce and provide classroom procedures on four techniques based on popular culture forms that I have developed in my last ten years of teaching American history. These techniques are the popular story paper, the illustrated song slide, the comic book, and the crankie. This paper will present possible objectives that may be used with any of these

techniques, a rationale for the use of these techniques in the classroom, and the discussion of the four techniques. This discussion includes: (1) brief historical background of each technique, (2) the procedural steps for classroom use, and (3) the evaluation of each activity.

Objectives

The following objectives can be used to guide the direction of any of the four techniques. These objectives are:

1. To provoke an awareness of the bias against women in American culture such as the monolithic and social myth of the submissive female which shrouds the true behavioral patterns of women in contemporary society.

2. To encourage students to study the female experience such as those experiences shared commonly by both women and men and those experiences uniquely women that for the most part are not shared by or with men.

3. To promote the treatment of both women and men as partners in society based on the belief that the history of humanity is no more man's than woman's, and woman's than man's.

4. To improve the self-image of female students while enhancing the understanding of male students concerning the social circumstances of contemporary women.

Rationale

The major impetus of these four techniques, the popular story paper, the illustrated song slides, the comic book, and the crankie, involves visual instruction. These techniques are a means to an end. They allow students to crystallize complex issues into logical and orderly patterns of understanding. As methodological tools, they can narrow the scope of research and put the subject of interest into a more accurate and more sharply defined focus. In other words, it allows students to organize their own experience and studies in order to understand and communicate what they have learned to others. It is a

way to clarify, fix, and condense information to be presented and displayed in an organized and sequential manner. During the process, a student (1) selects and gathers significant historical information, (2) examines relationships between and with them, and (3) attempts an arrangement of visual forms that has a logical order according to the individual's point of view.

Producing these activities help students capture the drama of various historical themes or concepts about women. They take the facts and the testimony of the women themselves and mold this information into a narrative with meaningful connections, relationships, and associations. Students designing these activities become active information seekers and identify and make effective use of available resources. Through this creative process, students focus on exploration and discovery, the asking of questions, the determination of relative importance of accumulated data, and solutions to problems. Also, the overall formats of these techniques are attractive and pleasing to the eye. They provide a novel approach to learning which in turn, promises to be motivating and fun.

The Literary Popular Story Paper[2]

Historical Background. There was a mass market for general reading matter in the 1830s, because of the development of the steam press with its fast, cheap quantity printing, the scarcity of light amusement created by a new-found leisure time, and the growing educational conscience in society. In the forefront of this mass market was the weekly literary story paper that flourished from 1840 to 1890. The story paper, written in a newspaper format usually no bigger than eight pages, provided the new middle class with fast-paced action, high adventure, and ethically uplifting stories that emphasized the triumph of good

over evil. A forerunner to the dime novel, the story paper always followed s simple formula: a rural/urban setting, an accomplished heroine, rugged individualism, a crafty villain, a heavily plotted cliffhanger, a possible hero, bold-spirited struggle, a daring rescue, and a happy ending.

Story papers used contemporary events of the time as topics. Early story papers used historical events such as the Westward Movement and the Civil War to provide background for their active characters in their various melodramatic situations. As the 1860s progressed, story papers began to consider social questions, calling attention to such ills as slavery, urban plight, evils of alcohol, child labor, and labor mistreatment. A dominant theme of the story papers was recognition of women as independent, worthwhile individuals with an intellectual, political, economic, and social life of their own. Such stories as Bertha, The Sewing Machine Girl; or, Death at the Wheel advocated equal pay for equal work, fair treatment, equal and better careers, and the women's suffrage movement.

Procedure. The procedure for the story paper is divided into an introduction to the assignment, student conference, and the follow-up activity. The introduction includes a brief history of the story paper and the nature of the assignment. Discussion revolves around the desired concepts or themes that the teacher wants to emphasize. Teachers can provide students with readings from textbooks, handouts, and various original documents to help develop the story paper's theme. If the students are able, they may be given the topic and concept and conduct their own original research in locating, examining, and interpreting appropriate data as they design their story papers. The students need a detailed description of the guidelines for writing a story paper.

STUDENT GUIDE TO WRITING A LITERARY STORY PAPER

There are three basic parts to the designing and writing of the story paper: (1) the characterization, (2) the plot outline, and (3) the layout format.

Characterization

Regardless of the historical or social theme, development of the characters for the story paper is the same. Stereotyped, they are of two basic personalities. The heroine is self-made, accomplished, adventurous, courageous, gentle, modest, unassuming, and self-possessed. She always overcomes the evil intentions of the of the villain and the siren.

The villain and the siren are lusty cads and uncouth ruffians filled with fiendish and crafty imaginations who for personal gain try to thwart and to defraud the heroine at every turn through the use of dirty tricks. The dastardly villain and unscrupulous siren are felons of every type who are victims of social injustice, mental disturbance, or some greedy confused motive.

In addition to the heroine, the villain, and the siren, other characters can be added to initiate interest and to carry out the story. These might be friends of "chums" of the heroine, "cronies" of the villain and siren (they never have friends), or additional characters that aid in the development, progression, and flow of the story.

Plot

The plot consists of a simple story line of sequential events, emphasis on the local setting, e.g., sweatshops, tenement housing, and plenty of action and

dialogue. In fact, the simpler the plot, the more interest it creates. They storyline involves some type of conflict between the heroine and the villain and siren in a particular situation concerning the role of women as depicted in the nineteenth century. The heroine wants to elevate the role of women as distinguishable and respectable; whereas, the villain and the siren want to exploit womanhood for their own evil designs.

The purpose of the story ought to be introduced at the earliest possible moment, bring together the principal characters in various conflicting situations revolving around a particular problem. After a series of these conflicts, the problem is resolved. The resolution should include some solution to the social/political conditions that effected women during this historical period.

Emphasis on local setting provides the necessary realism to establish the plausibility of the story.

The story paper is written in third person narrative with plenty of action and dialogue. Action words are used to portray fast, emotional events such as the shooting of a gun. (She fired the gun -- Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! -- five times without hesitation.) Very descriptive dialogue provides vivid pictures in the minds of the readers. when the historical background of the situation is added to this, the story paper is ready to be written.

Lay-out Format

In an attempt to be historically accurate, the story paper is written on 12 x 18 inch paper divided into four equal columns. Each column may be subdivided by drawing horizontal lines, no more than one-fourth of an inch between each line. Each page after the title page should like Figure 1.

The first page or title page should have the name and the logo of the story paper at the top quarter of the page. The middle one-half of the page should have a colored drawing depicting some emotional scene within the story. At the top of the picture or at the beginning of the first column, the title of the story is written in two parts; a primary title written in large, bold type followed by a secondary title, known as a subtitle, beginning with the word "or" written in small type below the primary title, e.g., The Peril of Priscilla Pringle, or, Life in the Slums. At the bottom quarter of the page, the story written in four columns begins. The title page of first page should follow the example of Figure 2.

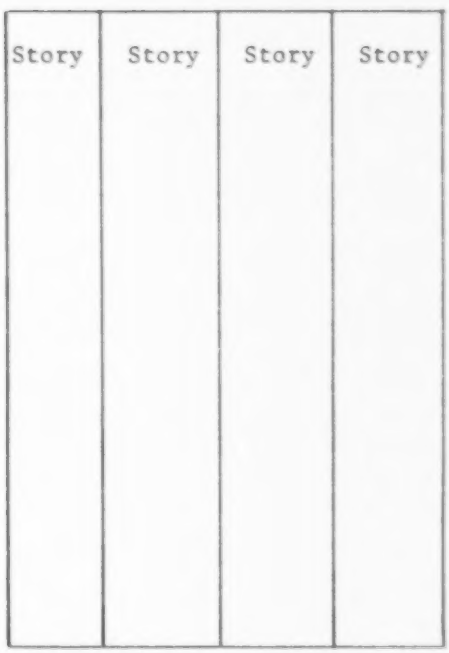


Figure 1

Figure 2

When reviewing the handout with the class, the teacher instructs the students on how to develop and write the assignment, assigns the page amount (between five and eight pages), and gives the allotted time in which to complete the project.

The student conference is designed to reveal problems that the student might be having, to give further guidelines and clarification in writing, and to ease student frustration. The ten-to-fifteen-minute conferences are held both during class and before and after school. The student brings to this conference a rough outline (includes the plot, the setting, and the cast of characters), two or three sample pages of writing, and a rough drawing for the front page. These items provide the teacher with the opportunity to check on the student's understanding of the assignment and any procedural and substantive problems. If desired, the teacher may want to call for a complete rough draft sometime before the assignment is due. These procedures usually result in a well-written document.

Two repeated major student problems are unwillingness to draw the front-page visual and inability to write in third person narrative. To handle the first problem, the teacher might indicate that the drawing is worth a substantial amount of the overall grade. Many students will respond by drawing the scene. The other problem is more of a directional and procedural item. Because some students think that they are writing a diary, they use an autobiographical narrative style. A reminder and some examples of third person narrative are usually necessary to put the students back on the right track.

Evaluation. The follow-up activity helps to evaluate the learning, the application, and transfer of the concept or theme. The activity gives the students the opportunity to dramatize the past and to allow their characters,

through a literary medium, to provide them with viewpoints that transcend from past to present. This activity is a large group discussion that begins with students giving brief synopses of their story papers. Next, the discussion focuses on the conclusions that can be drawn from the various story papers. Students read passages from other historical sources to support their positions and conclusions. At this time, depending on the controversial nature of the concept or theme, the teacher may want to challenge the conclusions by providing additional facts that tend to refute the student conclusions. The teacher may ten ask students to do additional inquiry into the concept or theme so that they may develop a more rational viewpoint of the issue.

In the final phase of the activity, student discuss how they can apply their conclusions about the various concepts and themes affecting women to women in modern society and how these themes are related to the students' everyday experiences. In this final phase, students see how American history relates to their lives and understand the role of women in the makeup of American history.

The Illustrated Song Slide [3]

Historical Background. The Illustrated Song Slide began as early as the 1840's, had a brief popularity in Northern theaters during the Civil War, and then became one of the most popular forms of entertainment during the turn of the- century. These 3½ x 4 inch colored transparencies accompanied with songs that told of simple tales in three verses and refrains were very popular in the vaudeville theater and became even more popular with the advent of the nickelodean. At first a series of slides were used as chap fillers as acts or movie reels were changed. However, it became apparent that the slides with their accompanying songs were very popular with the audiences. People would watch the

slides and sing along with the organist or piano player. Usually a series of 12 to 16 slides were used to promote newly-publicized songs in order to stimulate sales of sheet music.

Many of these slides provide insights into the turn-of-the-century America. At that time few observers realized that one particular segment of movie-goers, the recently arrived immigrants from Europe, regarded the nickelodean as their social club as well as a school of adult education. Through the "flickers" and song slides these newcomers were introduced not only to American etiquette, styles, and popular music, but, more important, to a pleasing and amazingly easy-to-learn course in the English language.

Illustrated song slides were also used for social discussion and as news sources. Early use of song slides were used in the treatment and therapy of mentally ill patients. They became popular in the Chautaugua circuits describing such social ills as poverty, unemployment, and drunkenness. As news sources, slides were used to illustrate current events such as political and tragic events. One such series dealt with the sinking of the Titanic.

With change in music habits, better use of film, and the coming of the newsreel, the illustrated song slide began to fade out by the end of 1914.

Procedure. Designing a series of song slides can either be an individual or a group project. If it is to be a group project, it is recommended to have no more than three people in a group. Any more than three students might result in unproductive work and, if done in class, in possible counter-productive behavior. This project should take three to five days to complete with an additional three days for showing the slides and one or two days for debriefing the activity.

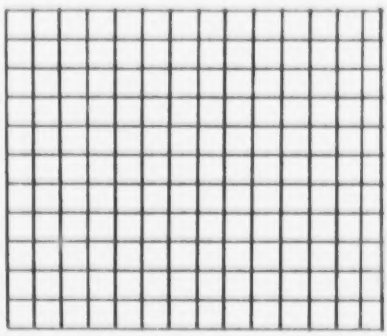
Students can purchase blank slides in almost any photography store. They should use transparency makers to draw on these slides.

The student or the group should identify a topic either of his/her choice or one that the teacher wants. It is encouraged to pick a woman historical theme between 1870 and 1914 when song slides were popular. The student should identify the relevant sources of information for his/her topic. Then he/she should gather appropriate information from the identified sources and begin to organize the information into a storyline. After gathering and organizing the information the student should design his/her a series of 12-16 slides according to the Student Guide. _ _ _

By using this outline, you need to have enough information to create 12 to 16 handmade slides to tell your story.

Layout

The layout involves the drawing of the slides that tell the story that you want to present plus one slide as your title. You need to decide what is the sequence of your story and what type of visual representation is needed for each slide. Then you need to draw each representation on an individual slide. The following grid can be useful in drawing the slides:



Narration

The narration is the dialogue that you will say as each of your slides are projected on the screen. You should keep your dialogue to 5 minutes if done as an individual, or 10 minutes if done as a group.

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questions is given to each student to answer during and after the presentation. From this handout, the teacher conducts the debriefing. Below is an example of questions.

1. What is the major focus of the illustrated slides?
2. Based on what you have seen, what conclusions does the slides illustrate?
3. What specific facts, concepts, and/or generalizations in this presentation justify these conclusions?
4. What particular drawing or drawings seem to bring out the major focus of the slides?
5. How can these conclusions be applied to the historical topic that we now are studying?
6. Are these conclusions consistent with those of the other illustrated slides? Why? Why not?
7. How can these conclusions be applicable to our current society?
8. Do you agree or disagree/accept or reject these conclusions? Why?
9. What questions do you feel that this group should have asked in their presentation?
10. How can this presentation be improved?

The Comic Book [4]

Historical Background. The creation of the comic book evolved from the daily comic strips and the colorful Sunday comic sections of American newspapers. Comic strips, as we know them, began in the 1890's and became immensely popular. The first comic book, The Funnies, was nothing more than a collection of newspaper comic strips. It wasn't long however, that comic books began to take on a different look. Cheaply mass-produced, these visual forms became a source

of diversion, escapism, and information. With the rise of literacy through mass education, a low-level reading population was created on a wide scale. Comics, with the built-in visual aid of pictorial representation, provided an opportunity for these slightly skilled readers to be entertained. With stories told in a sequence of two-dimensional pictures, comic books competed and eventually displaced older forms of popular sub-literate like the dime novels, the pulp magazines, and the magazine serials.

For over a quarter of century, these 64 page, 7¼ x 10¼ sized magazines was a dominant element in American culture. Stories included: westerns, romances, detective stories, tales of magic, war stories, aviation stories, jungle adventures, realistic dramas, funny animals, teenage comedies, sports stories, true-fact comics, medical and psychoanalytic stories, Bible Stories, political biographies, movie tie-ins, adaptations of books, historical fiction, horror stories, science fiction, etc.

Of course, the most famous comic book hero was featured in March, 1937, in the first issue of Detective Comics. His name: Superman. From that day on, myriad of super heroes and super villains appeared. No matter the characters, the story followed a standard formula: Heroes, heroines, villains, fantastic plots, cliff-hanger serials, strange gizmos, and a touch of realism. In the 1960's, the Marvel Comic group went one step farther. Not only did their super heroes and heroines have fantastic and unusual powers, but they also had a number of personal problems and psychological hangups that kept getting them in trouble. The most popular of these super heroes who became a cult figure in the late 60's and early 70's was Spiderman.

World War II proved to be a time that comic books, second only to the radio, became a dominant form of entertainment. The comic books themselves were very

patriotic finding the various heroes and heroines enthusiastically battling against the Axis forces or fighting spies and saboteurs on the home front. However, by 1954, comic books came under severe attack. Members of the Federal government, Joe McCarthy, in particular, claimed that comic books were part of the Red Menance trying to corrupt the innocent minds of American youth.

Yet the biggest blow to the comic book industry was the publication of Dr. Federic Wertham's Seduction of the Innocent. His book brought public indignation and further government denounciation. He maintained that comic books emphasized excesses of violence, gore, unwholesome treatment of sex, low level of writing and drawing. Reading comic books caused such social ills form functional illiteracy and sexual perversion to torture, murder and suicide.

Because of these pressures, the comic book industry created a self-imposed code known as the Comic Code. The code stated that all comic books would deal only with wholesome entertainment and would not crate any material that would be offensive or prove corruptible to young people.

The code was in force until the end of the 1960's. A number of underground comics, known as Comix, began to deal with such issues as opposition to the draft and the war in Vietnam, opposition to drug prohibition, support for oppressed minority groups, demands for women's liberation, a general dislike and mistrust for American government and society.

The image of women have played an important part in the history of comic books. Many of the early women were always damsels in distress or stereotypes in domestic scenes. However, in the 30's and 40's women became the assertive heroines and the sultry villainesses. Although many of the women characters were over romanticized or dehumanized, there have been through the history of the medium some very famous women characters. The most notable was Wonder Woman.

The major themes of Wonder Woman revolved around the idea that women will someday predominate over that of man, representing the triumph of love and understanding over brutality and oppression. Many of the stories illustrated that women should be free to be able to compete with men on a equal basis.

A contemporary Wonder Woman of today is the women private detective, Ms. Tree. As a secretary to a private detective, she witnessed the death of her employer. She then became a tough, hard boiled PI who shoots first and asks questions later. Ms. Tree deals with some interesting social issues. For example, in a two-part issue entitled "The Runaway," she solved a series of child molestations and kidnappings. In another two-part issue entitled "Right to Die," she becomes involved in a struggle over the issue of abortion between the Right of Choice and the Right to Life groups.

A visit to what are known as comic book stores, will demonstrate to any passerby that the comic book industry is going strong. It would appear that this medium that came about in 1929 is still going to be here for a long time to come.

Procedure. The student should follow these steps in order to create a comic book:

1. Pick an event or topic that involves women or a female personality of his/her choice or one that is assigned by the teacher.
2. Research the event, topic, or personality from various primary and secondary sources.
3. Develop and organize the research information into a narrative story.
4. Follow the guide on how to draw a comic book.

STUDENT GUIDE TO DRAWING A COMIC BOOK

There are five components to drawing a comic book: (1) plot development, (2) layout, (3) drawing, (4) narration, and (5) the cover page.

Plot Development

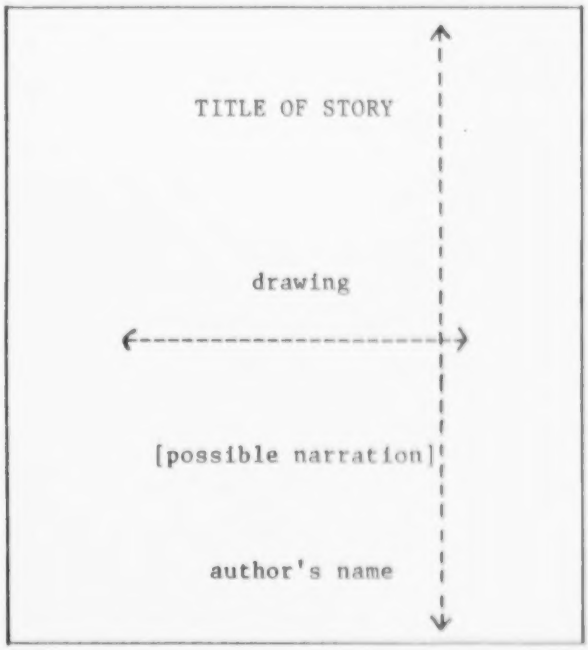
Plot development involves telling the story. You need to take the information that you research and need to break it down into a series of sequential events. The following steps can help in the development of the plot:

1. introduce the character(s)
2. establish their situation
3. introduce the events surrounding the characters (this might be some conflict that disrupts the situation)
4. build suspense if it is important to the story
5. reach a climax by showing some type of resolution or ending

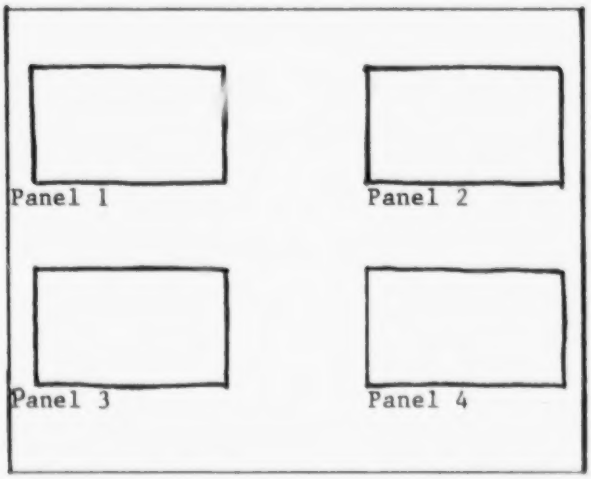
When the plot is complete, it should be written down in outline form as the plot is divided into the required number of scenes (that represent each panel of drawings as explained below), listing each scene in sequence, each with its setting, action, and characters, and their speeches, if any (see below how to treat narration. By writing out the plot in this manner, it will permit you to check it readily for inconsistencies and errors of action and sequence before making your drawings.

Layout

A comic book is made up of pages and these pages are compressed of units called panels. Each panel is a bordered illustration which contains visual information that conveys one scene of the story. Each panel when combined with other panels make up the total story. One page may have only one panel or as many as one feels that he/she can adequately convey the story without making it too difficult for the reader. For this project there will be two types of panels. The first type of panel is called the "splash page." The splash page is a one page panel that introduces the story. It contains usually the beginning scene with any narration running at the bottom of the page, the title of the story at the top of the page, and author credits somewhere near the bottom. The following example might be useful:



The second type of panel used for this project is a set of four panels per page that looks like this:



The comic book panel relates to the panel before and after it. The logical arrangement of these units forms a larger unit called a sequence. Sequences can be as brief as two or three panels or they can stretch out into several pages depending on the length of the story. You will be responsible for creating and drawing one "splash page" and a minimum of 28 additional smaller panels. It may be useful to determine how many panels you are going to draw, and then determine how your plot will fit into the numbered panels you have allocated for your story.

Drawing

You should realize that the purpose of this project is not to see how well you can draw, but to be able to convey your story in a visual form. The only

three requirements that are absolutely necessary: (1) you try to draw each panel as real as possible, (2) you draw each scene historically correct, and (3) you draw in color.

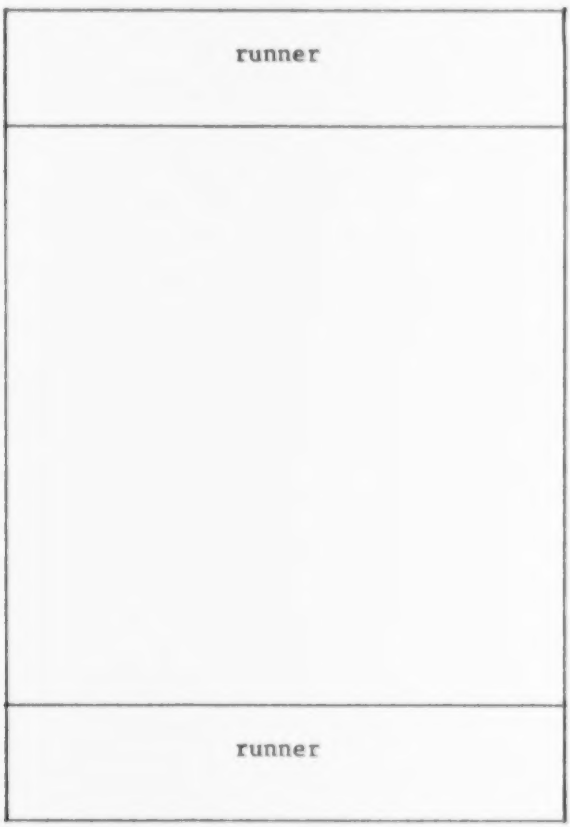
However, to help you add some variety to your drawings, you can draw a panel (scene) from whatever angle that you want. You can look at a scene head-on, upwards, downwards, sideways, far-away, close-up, or any way you want. There are three basic shots (though you can design any number of combinations that can help move the story along). Each of these shots generally conveys certain kinds of information as described below.

1. Long Shots - also called "establishing shots." These are good for conveying setting or establishing a locale. They're also, of course, good for showing things or events of great magnitude.
2. Medium Shots - also called "action depth" shots. These show full figures or objects with no parts hidden cropped by the panel border. These shots are good for showing action. Most televised sporting events are shown almost entirely from this depth for that reason. They're also good for giving an overall view of a person or object.
3. Close-Ups - These include any shots closer than action depth. If any part of the subject of the picture is cropped by the panel border, the picture is a close-up. Generally close-ups are used for faces or expressive gestures. They're good for showing reaction, emotion, and feelings -- and also for showing what a character looks like facially, or for showing detail on an object.

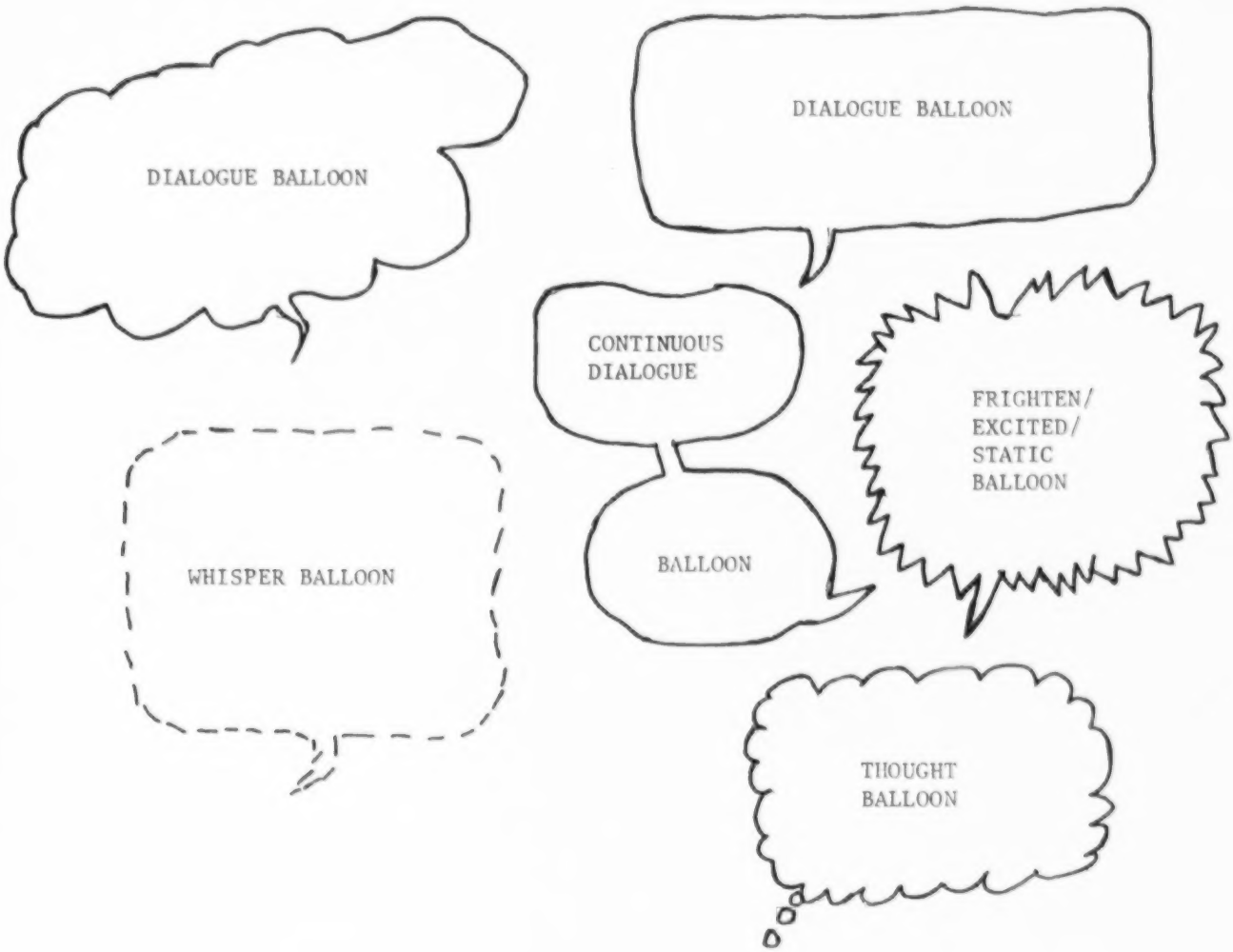
Narration

Narration is used chiefly as a means to convey essential information and to carry the plot forward. There are two basic types of narration: (1) the runner

and (2) the balloon. The runner is a block or a strip at the top or bottom of information to provide the direction of the story. This information describes what is taking place in the panel. Here is an example:



The balloon is a dramatic, graphic device also inside the panel that provides dialogue for any character that is speaking or thinking. By using the graphic elements of the balloon such as it shape, the lettering within the balloon, you are able to translate any emotion or aspect of language: tone, pitch, rhythm, and accent. The following are types of balloons one might incorporate.

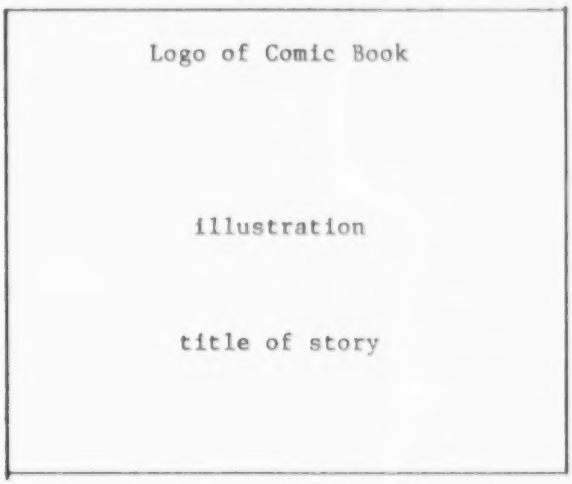


A rule of thumb when writing dialogue in balloons is not to overcrowd the dialogue and to remember that a cartoon panel is to be read from left to right so that a character on the right side of the panel is talking and a character on the left is responding, make sure that the balloon going to the character on the right is higher than the balloon going to the character on the left. This will indicate that the person on the right is speaking first.

Cover-Page

This is the most important page of the comic book. This is the actual cover that catches the eye of the reader causing him/her to want to read the

magazine. This is a full page of illustration with the title of the comic book at the top. The illustration highlights the basic story line. It is not a blown-up drawing of one of the panels inside the comic book. Normally, there is no runners or dialogue, but only the title of the story somewhere at the bottom. It can look like this:



Draw a preliminary rough sketch of each panel based on the division of the story. Use 8½ x 11 white paper dividing each page into four equal panels.

Turn in the preliminary drawings to the teacher at a prescribed time. The teacher will evaluate the drawings for comprehension and adequate research. At this time, the teacher may provide additional helpful information on further research, comprehensive story development, or graphic description and expression.

Upon receiving back the preliminary copy, make whatever changes are necessary, and draw the final copy in color.

Evaluation. The same type of evaluation used in the Literary Popular Story Paper can also be used with the Comic Book.

The Crankie [5]

Historical Background. While reading about woman's street theater, I came across a theater art form that struck me as having possible classroom potential. This form is known as the Crankie. A Crankie is a simple homemade story device made out of a cardboard box with two dowel sticks on either side of the box with a roll of paper attached to the sticks. "It gets its name from a scroll of paper that is cranked from left to right [up and down], pulling the pictures, words, shapes, and forms painted on it across the screen." A number of women street theater groups used this simple device as a communication medium going from neighborhood blocks, to street corners, to city parks, acquainting audiences with women issues. In format, the crankie is drawn and written in order to inform, educate, and stimulate people if not to action, at least to give serious thought about the role of women both in historical and modern society. Simply by rolling the pictures in a box accompanied by narration and, sometimes, with music, the crankie provides these street theater groups with a successful means for teaching and communicating their ideas to others.

Procedure. The procedure begins with a discussion revolving around the nature of the assignment. The teacher provides the desired historical event, personality, and/or concept. The teacher may either choose the groups or allow students to select their own groups. Four students provide an adequate number for each group for this assignment. The teacher instructs the students on how to develop the Crankie presentation, assigns the project, and discusses the evaluation procedures.

The following directions are given to each group to design their Crankie presentation:

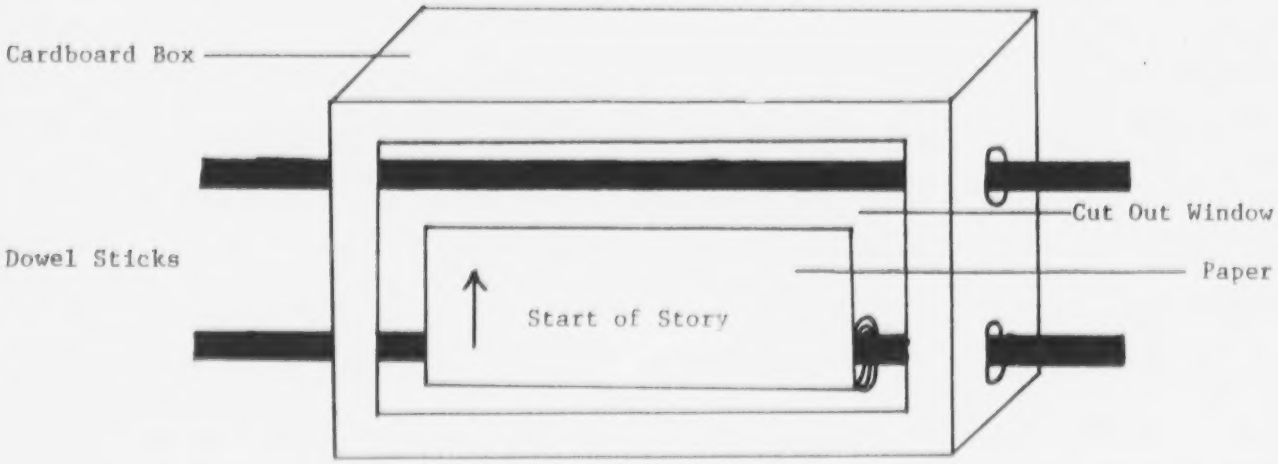
1. Each group is to develop a 15 to 20 minute presentation to be given before the class on an assigned day.

2. Each group will have five class periods to work on the activity. (How much time is given to the Crankie activity depends largely upon the makeup of the class. If students have had experience in working in small groups and in participating in group activities, five class periods are sufficient. If students do not have this background, they may need to add an extra day or two.

3. Each group develops a storyline based on the assigned topic given by the teacher. This storyline ought to be researched from the textbook notes, original documents, and other sources. Throughout this process every effort should be made to adhere to historical data based on documentary evidence. The storyline is then translated into about twenty drawn panels. These series of panels are drawn on long pieces of butcher paper. The size of each panel varies according to the availability of materials. Usually any panel less than three feet by three feet is too small to be seen by the rest of the class when the Crankie is being presented. The panels can be drawn either in color or in black and white.

4. Each group is to develop an explanatory lecture based on each of the panels to provide a narrative account of their Crankie. Music may also be used to give feeling and mood.

5. While the Crankie is being drawn, a member of the group ought to be building the frame that is to house the drawings. The frame usually consists of a large cardboard box, two dowel sticks needed to roll and unroll the paper from panel to panel. Here is how the frame is built.



6. Each group is encouraged to practice their presentation before giving it before the class. The presentation takes two students to turn the Crankie and usually one to give the narrative.

Evaluation. The evaluation process is the same as the illustrated song slides. The evaluation involves debriefing each of the Crankies individually and upon completion of the assignment, the Crankies as a whole. The purpose for the debriefing is to determine the understanding the students have of the assigned historical topic. Before each presentation, a handout of question is given to each student to answer during and after the presentation. From this handout, the teacher conducts the debriefing. Below is an example of questions:

1. What is the major focus of this Crankie?

2. Based on what you have seen, what conclusions does this Crankie illustrate?

3. What specific facts, concepts, and/or generalizations in this presentation justify these conclusions?

4. What particular drawing or drawings seem to bring out the major focus of the Crankie?

5. How can these conclusions be applied to the historical tropic that we now are studying?

6. Are these conclusions consistent with those of the other Crankies? Why? Why not?

7. How can these conclusions be applicable to our current society?

8. Do you agree or disagree/accept or reject these conclusions? Why

9. What questions do you feel that this group should have asked in their presentation.

10. How can this presentation be improved?

Conclusion

These four activities the literary story paper, the illustrated song slide, the comic book and the Crankie are creative outlets that can certainly make women's history become alive, interesting, and meaningful subject to all students. Students who have participated in these activities seem to support them enthusiastically. They generally believe they learn a great deal more about women from these activities than by traditional teaching methods.

These activities are historical mediums that can capture the drama of women's experiences during the history of America. As techniques, these activities can stimulate student curiosity about the past, in general, and the women's experiences, in particular. As a creative outlet, they help students put historical facts into meaningful associations and relationships. One also hopes that these techniques can help students to learn about the contributions and accomplishments of women and enable them to apply this understanding in appreciating people of all races, creeds, and both sexes.

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END

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